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THE DEVELOPMENT OF BELGIAN AFRICA IN RELATION TO THE COMMON MARKET

By

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(Notes on an address given January 29, 1958 before the World Institute of Economics in Hamburg.)

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Professor van Bilsen began his address by expressing his appreciation for the opportunity to discuss the problems of the future in Africa which confront Europe as a whole. In his view it is in the interest of Europe to discuss these problems quite openly. All the problems of the separate nations of Europe are at the same time problems which concern Europe as a whole. The question of German unity is of interest to the whole of Europe, for "Europe" includes the whole continent, not just the little group of countries in Western Europe. In the same way the questions confronting the separate European countries in Africa also concern all the countries of Europe.

He did not want to give a lecture for "spectators of the American type," he said; he wanted to speak as a European to Europeans, with the aim of arousing interest, paving the way for a free exchange of opinions and seeking the basis of the common conscience.

Professor van Bilsen went on to give some facts about Belgian Africa as a background to his subject. He reminded his audience of the tremendous area covered by Belgium's overseas possessions. Geographical experts do not all agree that the usual projection map is accurate, he said. But if one accepts it, supposing Leopoldville to be near Brussels, one would have to look for the mouth of the Congo in England, the northeastern frontier would lie on the Baltic, Ruanda-Urundi in the district ceded by Poland to the Soviet Union in 1945, while the southeastern border would extend to the frontiers of Yugoslavia and Rumania. The only parts of Europe lying outside the Belgian Congo would be southern Europe and Scandinavia. The Congo is 80 times as large as Belgium, nine and a half times the size of Western Germany and six and a half times the size of Eastern and Western Germany together.

The Belgian territory in Africa is, moreover, just the center of a larger natural area which includes French Equatorial Africa, the Cameroons, Northern Rhodesia and Angola. Lying on both sides of the equator this area is rich in mineral deposits and in waterpower. It is covered with forests, but has less agricultural land -- and that of poorer quality -- than other parts of Africa.

The Belgian Congo coincides more or less with the basin of the Congo River. This river has a regular flow of water; tributaries bringing the water from the different rainy periods flow into the Congo. The interior of the country consists entirely of tropical forest, where life has completely stagnated. On the edge of the forest, however, are prairies whose inhabitants were already pioneers of progress even before the period of European colonialism. Here well-organized African states had been formed under chosen chieftains with considerable power, while the weak tribes were forced back into the forest.

These geophysical and geopolitical facts are of great importance for the colonia power. When the period of colonial rule comes to an end, the centrifugal force of t districts on the fringe will become still more apparent, and their efforts to become independent of the central forest area. The peoples of the Belgian Congodo not form a unity. From the point of view of African culture its boundaries are artificial. Before the impact of colonialism it consisted of a mosaic of medium-sized and small political units, with only a few larger states; in addition, the neighboring states stretched into the present territory of the Belgian Congo.

For many modern nations in Asia and Africa it was the impact of a colonial power that first created a basis for unity. Foreign rule has given these areas economic unity, a network of communications, a common language, a homogeneous administrative system, a compact legislation, a common financial existence. Most important of all, it has created a basis for political and cultural unity by providing a motive for anti-foreign political resistance.

As far as population is concerned the Belgian Congo is a desert. There are only five persons per square kilometer. In this respect the Belgian Congo is quite diffe rent from the other countries described as "under-developed." It is not overpopulat like China, India, Egypt, Algeria or Java. This obstacle to raising the standard of living does not exist in the Belgian Congo. On the contrary, there is a scarcity of people and a scarcity of labor. (In Ruanda-Urundi the situation is different: the density of population amounts to 80 persons per square kilometer and the sole occupa tion is agriculture.)

The Belgian Congo is a continental area. The most important areas are more than 1000 km. from the nearest port. Owing to the swift current of the rivers, it is difficult to use them as a cheap means of transport. So the products from the east of the Congo -- especially from the district on Lake Kivu -- and those from Ruanda-Urundi have to be reloaded seven or eight times before they can be shipped from the ocean port of Matadi.

Its isolation in the center of the continent probably explains why Mohammedanism has had very little influence on the religious, cultural and economic life. It also explains why Europe played no part in the Congo until about 75 years ago.

Belgium's Entrance into the Congo.

At that moment Africa was already being divided up. France was striving for col nial possessions. Germany and Italy, themselves just unified, were becoming active. Great Britain wanted to retain its world dominion. Belgium possessed little politic power but its economic importance was considerable. The Belgians in general were no thinking of adventures in colonialism, but King Leopold II had more imagination. He wanted to raise the prestige of Belgium and of his dynasty by acquiring a colony. He imagined that an area under Belgian rule in Africa would form a neutral buffer state in the same way that Belgium did in Europe. The King won the support of Bismarck.

So the modern history of the Belgian Congo begins with an international statute which reflects the idea of an international mission. The Congo Act, which was drawn up at the Conference of Berlin in 1885, relates, actually, not only to what is today the Belgian Congo, but also to German East Africa (since 1919 Tanganyika and Ruanda-Urundi), Kenya, Uganda, important areas of French Equatorial Africa and Rhodesia. But the most important thing about it is that it forms the basis for the whole life of th Belgian Congo.

This act laid down the principle of the "Open Door." No discrimination was to be made between the citizens of "civilized" countries. No customs concessions were

permitted in favor of citizens of the colonial power, nor was the colonial power allowed any advantages in obtaining raw materials. Communications were not to be impeded. The Statute of Berlin, which is still in force, therefore made Central Africa into a zone of free commercial exchange, a sort of "common market," at any rate an international or "open" colony.

In actual fact, of course, the capital invested in the Congo was mainly Belgian, and commercial relations were opened up mainly with Belgium. In the other areas covered by the Statute of Berlin the other colonial powers had the main influence. But the clauses of the Congo Act are still of interest today as a model for a common market. It is thought in some quarters that the French colonies could be opened up to the trade, the capital and the people of the nations that make up the European Common Market, merely by saying some magic word. It is therefore interesting to follow developments in the Congo, which was at first not a Belgian colony but an independent state under the rule of King Leopold II, with the international status described above. (This status lasted until 1908 when the Congo territory became a Belgian colony.) The Congo was a poor state. The natives lived on the bare subsistence level and could not pay any taxes, and Belgium did not give the state any subsidies. But it needed funds to ensure order, to protect itself against Arab penetration, to build railways, to develop mining and promote welfare.

The King was therefore obliged to enlist the help of banks and financial associations, which naturally made sure of getting their own share. They obtained great areas of land and prospecting rights. State officials began to exploit the forests and the unused land. No notice was taken of the clauses of the Congo Act relating to freedom of trade or to social-political responsibility.

The difficulties and scandals of that era are well known. In 1908 Belgium took over a country which was rich in possibilities. It gave the Congo a constitution which at that time could be called liberal. It intended to look after the native population and to help them progress.

The economic history of the Belgian Congo falls into three stages: 1) Exploitation; 2) A period in which the main feature was the utilization of raw materials; 3) A period of industrialization and of agricultural improvement in which the economy developed in many different ways. During the period of exploitation the natives were made to deliver goods by force. Trading companies made big profits out of forms of wealth which were accessible without capital investment. The products most sought after were ivory and rubber.

The Congo Under Belgian Rule

The second period began when Belgium took over the rule of the Congo. As is understandable, the government's main purpose was to mine its raw materials, especially minerals. At that time, before the first world war, there was no question of an obligation to help under-developed countries. Belgium expected the Congo to involve no expenditure. The country itself was to provide the funds for its administration, for equipping itself with essential facilities, for building ports and roads, schools and hospitals.

It was already known that the Congo was as rich in minerals as South Africa or Rhodesia, and that the Katanga district contained enormous wealth. Today the Belgian Congo supplies 75% of the industrial diamonds of the world and a high percentage of the uranium (the ore shows the highest concentration.) The Congo is fourth on the list of copper-producing areas (10% of the world's production), it supplies 75% of the world's production of cobalt, 8% of the tin , 5% of the manganese and 2% of the

gold. With the exception of the gold, which is alluvial in origin, the minerals are easy to mine and the deposits are rich. Open working is nearly always possible.

The solution of the financial problem was therefore found in mining. The state could raise the money it needed by raising the export duties on the ore and sharing in the profits from the mines. In Elisabethville in 1911 the first copper mine was opened. It was the beginning of a new development which by 1956 had grown to the point where exports of ore and raw metals alone amounted to 19 milliard(1) Belgian francs' worth, with total exports valued at 30 milliard Belgian francs. The copper production rose from 100,000 tons in 1936 to 250,000 tons in 1956; tin production from 6400 tons to 15,000 tons; cobalt from 281 to 9000 tons; diamonds from 4.6 million to 14 million carats. In 1956 the exports of copper alone amounted to 12 milliard Belgian francs, out of a total of 19 milliard francs worth of minerals exported. The total production of copper, uranium, cobalt, zinc and other products is in the hands of a single company, the "Union Minière du Haut-Katanga", which in its turn is under the jurisdiction of the Société Générale de Belgique.

The export duties on copper today bring in 9% of the income of the state in the Belgian Congo. Twenty-three percent of the income of the state comes from export duties; 15.5% from import duties; 25.5% from duties on profits and income and 9% on the state's own share of the profits. It may be seen therefore that the state and the mine-owners are closely interdependent. The budget depends on the profits from the mining companies.

A system of communications has had to be planned of course, in order to open up the whole country, but especially in order to transport the products from the mines to the sea, to Matadi. The roads had to be built and kept in order by the villages themselves. Since the labor involved was much disliked, the people preferred to go and live in the European industrial centers, especially in the mining areas. The state had to ensure that there were workers for the mines. If the state had been rich, if it had received large subsidies from Belgium, for instance, a policy might have been possible which would have benefited the villagers primarily. The exodus to the mining areas could have been halted. But mining is the economic basis of the country. Arrangements therefore had to be made for the influx of workers. The state endeavored to ensure humane conditions of work and a humane system of recruitment; but at the same time it permitted and even favored the pressure of the Belgian officials and managers on the villagers. The Europeans wanted to make them work in the mines. In 1917, 47,000 men of working age were living in the "European" settlements, by 1937 there were 491,000, in 1957, 1.2 million, or one-third of all the men of working age in the Congo. Pressure from outside has gradually been replaced by a voluntary flight from the land, because in the meantime the situation has completely changed.

The workers in the new industrial centers had to be fed. In the interests of the meat-producers, the purchase of cattle for beef was arranged by the mining companies or by companies affiliated with them. But the agricultural products -- maniok, beans, etc. -- were bought in the villages. And as the villagers only cultivated enough for their own needs, there was no surplus available. The more working-men left the villages, the lower agricultural production fell. Dearth and famine followed land fallen into disuse. The state then stepped in and forced the people to cultivate it.

The mining companies based their calculations on low wages. Prices for food

1) A milliard equals one thousand million. In the U.S.A., England and France it is also called a billion.

therefore had to be kept low, too, so that the wages offered in the mines would remain sufficiently attractive in comparison with farmers' incomes. It was the state which fixed the prices.

As one-third of the men of working age were drawn away from the villages, the birth rate there fell. The constant migration of workers led to the spread of tropical diseases and venereal diseases. Social problems also arose in the camps and workers' quarters where there were no women. In overpopulated areas like India or Java, especially, these problems would have alarmed the sociologists and moralists. But in the Belgian Congo it was the responsible men in industry who were disturbed, especially the directors of the mines. The wealth of Africa cannot be opened up without the help of Africans. But the number of Africans was declining on two sides: in the villages the birth rate was falling and in the work-camps there were no births at all.

This situation led the big companies about 20 years ago to take matters in hand. The result was a family settlement policy. Today the mining companies are universally praised for their achievements in this sphere. These achievements are in the economic interest of the mines themselves. It pays the mine-owners to provide good accommodation for the worker and his family, to raise the level of education, to keep him healthy, to give him technical training, to feed him well. The mines want working families to settle in the mining districts so that their children may also be good workers. This policy goes so far that premiums are paid to workers who marry in their villages and then bring their wives with them to the place where they are going to work. The transportation facilities for new workers have also been considerably improved. Air transport has even been provided recently. In 1937 the proportion of women to men in the European centers was only 1 to 5; in 1957, however, it was 2 to 3. In 1937 there were no children at all; by 1957 there was on the average more than one child per family.

In the rural areas, in addition to being compelled to cultivate the land, the people were compelled to cultivate nuts, which are important for export. Other nuts (e.g. for palm oil) are cultivated by a few big companies which have the monopoly concession in certain areas; these include the Unilever group. Finally there are European plantations with cheap black labor. These three systems serve for the production of other export goods, which have assumed importance in addition to minerals: cotton, palm oil, sisal, coffee, rubber, cinchona (for quinine), wood, etc.

A New Economic Chapter

The economic crisis in the 1930's opened a new chapter and ended the period when cultivation of raw materials was the sole occupation of the Congo. Since the second world war especially, it has been realized that an economy based solely on surplus production is vulnerable. Attention is now concentrated upon the creation of additional purchasing power, higher wages and all that makes for the opening up of a domestic market through industrialization and the promotion of agriculture.

The new ideas are embodied in the Ten Year Plan of 1949, which provided for the investment of 50 milliard Belgian francs. The ports, railways and roads were modernized, schools and research institutes built. More use was made of water power. New industries sprang up. Wages were raised to induce employers to save labor (which had become expensive) and to encourage technical training; the higher wages also provided purchasing power for the new consumption goods. During the last five years the level of wages has doubled.

At the present time a new plan of development is being prepared, which particularly stresses the importance of the modernization of agriculture. Further opportunities for industrialization will be created if the big project to build a barrage on the Ingatal is carried out. This project will cost 250 milliard Belgian francs, and would produce 25 million kilowatts. This electric power will permit the manufacture of uranium and bauxite (the latter will be brought from French Guinea). It is hoped that an African "Ruhr" will be created in the lower part of the Congo basin. In view of the increase in production and the necessary financial backing, these plans are of first-rank international importance.

In connection with the extension of industry, a comprehensive system of social security has been established, providing protection of labor, wage security, limitation of the hours of work, old age pensions, accident insurance, family allowances This system of social security surpasses the achievements of all the other colonies and also those of nearly all the independent "under-developed" countries.

The Other Side of the Picture

There is another side to the picture, however. The social security and working conditions available to white people in the Belgian Congo are very different from those available to Africans. A great deal of the psychological and moral advantage of improving the African's working conditions is thereby lost. However well he may live in comparison with other countries, he cannot be content so long as the European working beside him enjoys conditions which are conspicuously better. The social security provided to each European in the Belgian Congo today costs 500,000 Belgian francs per annum.

It may be impossible to raise the wages of the Africans to the European standard, which is on the "American" level. But would it be any easier to persuade the Europeans to lower their standard of living (with the exception of the real specialists)? It is true that African workmen, even African teachers, and certainly office-workers in the Belgian Congo earn more than their counterparts in India or in most of the countries of Africa and Asia. And it is true that between 1950 and 1956 wages have doubled.

But it is equally true that the educated Africans compare their own position with that of the privileged Belgians. The average wage of an African worker amounts only to 5000 Belgian francs per annum; the African peasant, who is forced to plant cotton, earns only 2000 Belgian francs (DM 166) on the average.

It is certainly true that within the last eight years the Belgian authorities have built 40,000 decent houses, costing 60,000 Belgian francs (DM 15,000) each, for Africans to live in. But it is equally true that in Leopoldville the number of African inhabitants has increased from 35,000 to 350,000 in the last 20 years. These Africans live in districts without drainage or lighting. They look enviously at the luxurious accommodations provided for the 20,000 Europeans.

It is also true that sleeping-sickness has been stamped out and large sums of money are being invested to combat other epidemic illnesses. In the Belgian Congo there is one doctor for 22,000 inhabitants, whereas in Indonesia there is only one to 60,000 inhabitants (under Dutch rule only one to 70,000.) In Belgium itself infant mortality has fallen to 30 births per 1000; in some particularly well-equipped industrial centers of the Belgian Congo it has been reduced to 52 per 1000. But it must be borne in mind that these improvements affect only a specially-selected group of the population. In the villages infant mortality is still appallingly high. And the average expectation of life in the Belgian Congo is only 39 years, whereas in Belgium it is 65 years.

The economic life of the Belgian Congo is in full process of development. In 1940 customs duties brought in 106 million Belgian francs; in 1957 it was 4.8 milliard. But along with this rise it should be mentioned that the economic productivity of the native Africans rose only from 128 million to 360 million between 1940 and 1957. The customs duties therefore rose thirty-fold, whereas the value of the African economy increased only 2.8 times.

The social product of the Belgian Congo has risen annually by 14%, while the product of native agriculture has risen only 2-3%. In 1950 the income of Africans formed only 40% of the national income. In the next six years it rose rapidly to 54% in 1956. But 99% of the population had to rest content with this 54%. The remaining 46% was distributed among the European population, which formed only 1% of the whole.

The coefficient of investment in the economy of the Belgian Congo amounts to 31% of the gross national income. This would set a world record, if that had not already been established by the German Federal Republic. Nearly half the investments (45%) come from the state's Ten Year Plan, the remainder almost entirely from the self-financing of the industries and not from freshly-invested capital. In recent years Belgian private industry has not imported any new investment capital into the Belgian Congo, although the gross profits of the European industries there amounted in 1956 to 16 milliard Belgian francs (1.2 milliard DM) which is 26% of the gross national income. A larger amount goes abroad every year as dividends, largely to Belgium: in 1954 2.5 milliard Belgian francs went abroad, in 1956 4.8 milliard Belgian francs (of which 3.6 milliard went to Belgium).

Thus in spite of its productivity the Belgian Congo is still an "under-developed" and therefore a poor country. Belgium with 8,000,000 inhabitants has an annual budget of 100 milliard Belgian francs, whereas the Belgian Congo, with 12,000,000 inhabitants and an area 80 times the size that needs innumerable development projects, only has a budget of 12 milliard Belgian francs.

From the point of view of Western Europe the development in Belgian Africa has been amazing. Seventy-five years ago it was a "wild" country; within ten years it has carried out a development programme involving 50 milliard Belgian francs (4 milliard DM). Industry has been enormously extended, new industries have been started, and a home market has sprung up.

Until 10 years ago Belgium confined itself to providing elementary schools for Africans. In the Belgian Congo and Ruanda-Urundi there are fewer illiterate people than in any other colonial areas or "undeveloped" states. More than half the children of school age attend the elementary schools (which are admittedly very elementary.) Under the pressure of development Belgium has changed its policy. During the last four years two universities have been opened in Belgian Africa, and the first black students have been able to attend universities in Europe.

In Western eyes considerable progress has taken place in the Congo. But in the second half of the twentieth century one must look at Africa through the eyes of the African, just as one must look at Asia through the eyes of an Asian, and at the Near East with the eyes of an Oriental. These peoples, who form the major part of the world's population, have learned to compare their poverty with our wealth. They want to take their destiny into their own hands. They are impelled by the "Revolution of Rising Expectations."

The African Point of View

The desires of the Africans may be summed up under three headings:

1. Political independence.
2. Economic independence.
3. Education and training to secure equal rights.

The world is a unit. No part of the world can escape the influence of the movement at work among the non-European peoples.

Even if it is asserted with some justice that the social and economic progress of the Belgian Congo is greater than the corresponding development in any other country in Africa, it is nevertheless a fact that its neighbors are more developed politically. The emancipation of the African into full political independence is a moral duty for Belgium, a categorical imperative of politics. In the not too distant future the Belgian Congo and Ruanda-Urundi must become independent states or one independent state. These states must be modern, united and well-balanced. They must have the right to determine their own form of government and to decide freely about their relations with Belgium, Europe and the rest of the world, especially with the other countries of Africa.

Belgium and the West must therefore ensure that a sufficient number of Africans are trained to assume leadership. Modern institutions must be set up which will us modern techniques on the Western model and at the same time serve African interests Furthermore, economic development must be speeded up and additional financial help given from outside, especially in the form of investment in public works. This tas is assuming an increasingly international character.

One section of public opinion in Belgium is recognizing more and more its responsibilities in Africa. It is true that many groups think of the possible dangers and of future changes in their way of life, which would be very painful for them personally. But others are thinking of the task of leading Belgian Africa to emancipation. The danger of inadequate preparation can still be averted. There are plenty of unfortunate examples of that.

In conclusion Professor van Bilsen stated that he had strong confidence in Belgium in this respect, also confidence in the friendship of the African citizens in the Belgian Congo and Ruanda-Urundi. But they have not yet won the battle. "Our official colonial policy is still very colonial," he said, adding that Europe, to whose views Belgium is tending more and more to subscribe, is a continent of colonialism. Europe as a whole must leave the past behind as soon as possible, he went on. If Europe cannot eliminate colonialism, then Europe's common endeavors in Africa are only a brief phase in the delaying tactics of Western conservatism in it struggle against a new kind of world.

The question is no longer, "What is that Africa like which we need in order to form a Eurafrica in which Africa provides raw materials, cheap labor and markets for Europe?" Today the question should be, "What should Europe be like if it is to be liked by Africa?" And to answer that question, one must go to the Africans themselves.

Instead of forcing laws upon the Africans whereby only one part of Africa would be united and receive free access to the Common Market, the question should have been addressed to Africa as a whole and also to the Near East. Africa should have been asked for its positive agreement, as is usually done within the economic community of Europe.

Afro-Asian Conferences are held. Why are there no Afro-European Conferences? At conferences of this kind Europeans and Africans should meet to discuss the conditions requisite for a free association. Such conferences should also be attended by European countries which have no direct colonial responsibilities in Africa, or have them no longer: Germany, Italy, Scandinavia, Yugoslavia, Greece, Austria and others. And it is for them to take the initiative. The African countries which are independent should also take an active part in the discussions: Ethiopia, Ghana, Tunis, Egypt, the Sudan, Morocco, etc.

There is a possibility that East and West will carry their antagonism a stage further by vying with each other for the favor of the African countries. If we refuse to shoulder risks and to make sacrifices, if we continue to cling blindly to our privileges and to unite in a form of joint European colonialism, then the consequences to ourselves may be disastrous.

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Discussion-period Following Professor van Bilsen's Address

The chairman thanked the speaker, particularly for being so unreservedly frank. He said he knew that Professor van Bilsen was one of the men responsible for drawing up a plan which provided a basis for a valid partnership between Africans and Europeans in Belgian Africa within thirty years. In practice this plan represented a complete renunciation of the attitude so vividly described in Professor van Bilsen's address. A malicious member of the audience might have interpreted this to mean that ethical or Christian considerations were being used as mere pretexts, while the real motives were purely utilitarian. Professor van Bilsen with utter frankness had called for a complete reversal of this attitude. We must give full support to this appeal, the chairman said. But we must realize that his ideas will certainly meet with a great deal of opposition.

In considering the effect of the new Common Market on Africa, the chairman said that for Germans the question was how to upset the old trading relationships as little as possible when new arrangements were made. He cited the example of the economic situation in Ghana, addressing his remarks to a representative of that country in the audience. If customs duties were imposed on everything imported into the Common Market, Ghana would suddenly have more difficulty in selling its cocoa, and Ghana's economy would be bound to experience great difficulties. The greater part of the cocoa on which Ghana's economic life depends must be sold in West Germany and in Holland. These markets could not be closed without warning, or Ghana would suffer serious effects. And Ghana is a country which is an exceptionally good customer for West German industrial products. West Germany, especially Hamburg, is not prepared to hurt old friends in order to gain new ones. The question of the Common Market must therefore be considered in relation to the interests of the existing free trade zone and those of all the countries involved. When speaking of common interests, one must -- as the speaker did -- include all the members of the modern world.

Dr. Ralph von Gersdorff of the Department of Research on New Development Areas attached to the International Economic Institute of Hamburg asked Professor van Bilsen two questions. First, does not rapid emancipation involve the danger that new barriers will be erected in a world which needs, not fresh nationalistic divisions but integration? Nothing should be done, in his opinion, to encourage the formation of an anti-colonialist front. Secondly, he asked whether there are really enough Africans who are capable of speaking on behalf of Africa. He himself was familiar with the situation in the Portuguese provinces of Africa, where this second question

must definitely be answered in the negative.

Herr Hendrik Boks of the firm of Philips asked what was the rôle of the politi cal parties in the Belgian Congo. He also asked what relations the Commission for Technical Cooperation in Africa south of the Sahara had with the Common Market.

Professor K.H.Pfeffer of the Department of Geopolitical Research (Länderkunde) of the International Economic Institute, Hamburg, asked whether the United Nations mandate in Ruanda-Urundi showed practical results. He also asked whether the geographical bond between the Katanga district and Northern Rhodesia did not cause special difficulties, as the political development in the Belgian Congo was so different from that in the Federation of Rhodesia-Nyasaland.

In reply, Professor van Bilsen emphasized unequivocally that in his opinion a union could and should be effected only on the basis of a free decision. His own point of view was anything but nationalistic but, like Dr. von Gersdorff, he himself regarded integration as a necessity. But it was a psychological problem. If Europe tried to use force, then Africa would undoubtedly turn to Asia or elsewher Even Napoleon had not succeeded in uniting Europe by force. And Europe could not bind Africa to itself by force today. After its declaration of independence, Ghan had voluntarily remained a member of the Commonwealth, and Bourguiba's Tunis wante close cooperation with France. But if Tunis had not become politically free, Bourguiba would have been an opponent of France.

The union of Europe has been discussed with all the Europeans concerned. But the question of including Africa in the Common Market has not been discussed with the Africans. M. Pineau, the French foreign minister, insisted at Venice on considerable sums being invested by other states in French Africa as a condition for France's cooperation in the Common Market. His request was granted and the price paid -- but Africa was not asked; there were not even any negotiations with French Africans. This is bound to lead to big problems for countries like Germany and Holland in their relations with other states such as Ghana. It is quite possible to find Africans qualified to discuss these questions. The discussions should be as unofficial as possible, of a semi-private nature.

The Commission for Technical Cooperation in Africa south of the Sahara is deal ing with the coordination of technical measures and hitherto has had nothing to do with the possibilities of the Common Market. It was originally started by the Sou African Union and by the colonial powers; some of the independent African states joined it afterwards. But European states without colonial responsibilities do no belong to it. The Commission has now worked out a "Colombo Plan" for Africa.

Thanks to the inspections of the United Nations Commissions, Ruanda-Urundi in many respects has made quicker strides toward freedom than the Belgian Congo. Its Ten Year Plan is being paid for by Belgium (300-400 million Belgian francs per annum). While praising the economic and social achievements of Belgium, the United Nations has criticized it for not granting political freedoms. These criticisms must be met. The greater freedom enjoyed in the territory under mandate has had repercussions in the Belgian Congo.

Of course Katanga is closely linked with Northern Rhodesia geographically. Bu the plateau of Katanga was almost unpopulated (only two persons per sq. km.) befor its development as a mining area. Immigrants have come in mainly from other parts of the Belgian Congo. It therefore feels closer links today with the rest of the Belgian Congo than with Northern Rhodesia. Legislation has forced the inhabitants

of the two areas to adopt different ways of life. Professor van Bilsen believes that eventually Katanga will become part of the Congo territory.

There are no political parties in the Belgian Congo, and there is only one licensed press. There cannot be any parties because there is no real freedom of association. They cannot have any programme so long as there are no general elections. In 1957 for the first time three municipal elections were held. For the time being, ties of origin take the place of ideological affiliations or groups with common interests. This is where the process of emancipation must begin.